

SOUTH LAKES HOUSING TENANTS' COMMITTEE MINUTES
10.30 am THURSDAY 12 JANUARY 2012
HELD AT
THE RESOURCE CENTRE, LITTLE AYNAM HOUSE, KENDAL

Present: Charles Howarth (Chair)
John Short
Don Brookes
Robin Martakies
Joan Chadwick
Dorothy Dixon
Doone Ward
Win Sayers
Glenys Brood

Officers in attendance: John Mansergh- Performance Manager, SLH
John Stirling- Tenant Involvement Officer, SLH

Guests Jamie Martin- Independent Tenant Advisor

Apologies: Ron Pritchard
Margaret Pritchard
Annice Lewis
Margaret Akrigg

Circulation: As above

799 Minutes of Previous Meeting (24 November 2011)

ACTION

Simon Hughes not listed as an attendee. Agreed as a true record as amended.

800 Matters arising

Minute 791 (grounds maintenance monitoring) Robin Martakies asked if there had been any progress on this matter. Jamie Martin said that this matter would be covered in a later session, looking at how tenants would hold SLH to account for their commitments made in the Offer Document. John Mansergh said that a budget had been identified in 2012-13 to recruit and train Tenant Inspectors.

Minute 796 (members reports- Tenant Panels) Robin Martakies referred to recent developments at Rochdale, where their housing had recently transferred to a community ownership model. Jamie Martin said the circumstances were particular to Rochdale, and that all options had been evaluated by SLDC and their tenants during the options appraisal in 2010. The new arrangements had been agreed by both parties.

801 Appointment to Housing Provision Advisory Group

John Stirling reported that enquiries revealed that the Housing Provision Advisory Group (HPAG) was not part of the formal committee structure of SLDC, but an informal group to advise the Portfolio Holder. The next meeting of the Group was on 23 January 2012, and at the time of enquiry no further meetings had been fixed.

Jamie Martin said that it was a strategic group involving housing developers within the District, with links to similar groups across the county. The terms of reference of both HPAG and the SLDC Overview and Scrutiny Committees were at the discretion of SLDC.

ACTION

There was no nomination from the Committee to HPAG, however the Committee wished HPAG to be aware of their interest.

J St

802 SLH Board Minutes (30 November 2011)

Minute 1090 (Chief Executive's Report) Robin Martakies asked for further details on the following 2 items.

1. The recently obtained ASBO. (A copy of the press release was circulated later in the meeting).
2. Supporting People. Jamie Martin said that the promises made within the Offer Document had to be adhered to and tenants would monitor the situation.

Minute 2000 (Photovoltaic Panels Decision Update) Robin Martakies asked if more panels would be installed. Charles Howarth said that provided a business case could be established, more panels would be fitted. Robin requested fellow Tenant Board Directors to raise this issue at the Board meeting and request confirmation of the Board's policy.

Minute 2003 (Any Other Business- CD of transferred land) Robin Martakies asked for copies of the CD to be distributed to members of Tenants' Committee too. John Mansergh said that once the negotiations with SLDC were complete, the CD would be available.

JM

803 SLH Board agenda (19 January 2012)

Item 5.5 (ICT Strategy) Robin Martakies asked if the additional capital and revenue budgets had been identified? John Mansergh said that the budget for the IT improvements was contained within the Business Plan.

804 Annual Report

John Mansergh reminded the Committee that at their meeting on 11 August 2011 they resolved- 'due to the exceptional circumstances of consulting tenants on Stock Transfer, the Annual Report be distributed to tenants following the completion of the ballot'. The ballot had now been completed and it was now time to decide how to circulate the report. Given that tenants are due to receive a further 2 transfer related newsletters before March, there were 3 options to consider.

1. Print and post out to all tenants at a cost of approximately £6000.
2. Include a note in the next Transfer Newsletter, inviting any tenant to seek further information and their own copy from SLH.
3. Print a small number of copies for distribution to Tenants' Committee, Residents Associations etc.

Jamie Martin said that the annual report to tenants was very important, and the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) expected landlords to inform tenants about their performance.

Robin Martakies said that the resolution had been passed and it should now be circulated.

John Short suggested it could be posted out along with one of the Transfer Newsletters, or the six monthly rent statements.

ACTION

Doone Ward suggested that it could be made available online and at libraries as a lot of tenants would place it straight into the recycling box.

Jamie Martin said that the challenge for the future was to make these types of document more appealing to tenants.

Robin Martakies proposed, seconded by Don Brookes, that the report be circulated as per the original resolution. The matter was carried unanimously.

JM

805 Treasurers Report

John Short circulated his report together with a corrected page arising from a clerical error in the previous period. John said that he would review his monthly target budget downwards, as experience had shown that a lower figure was workable. John Mansergh said that SLH was not looking to reduce the budget of the Committee, and did not want to interfere with how their Treasurer reports the figures. John Short asked for authority to sign a cheque payable to himself for his own expenses, together with Joan Chadwick. This was necessary as Margaret Akrigg was not present at the meeting. The Committee gave authority for this action.

806 Members Reports

None since last meeting.

807 Any Other Business

John Stirling circulated an update on the Downsizing Scheme which would be piloted between now and April. Robin Martakies said that the amounts payable were reasonable, but wondered how the scheme was being advertised. John Mansergh said that as this was a pilot scheme at this stage, tenants were only being identified and approached by Housing Officers (HOs) through the allocations process. Should the policy be adopted, the scheme would be advertised more widely. The Committee asked for their views to be passed to the Housing Manager.

J St

Robin Martakies asked how many tenants had received permission to take in a lodger. John Stirling to enquire.

J St

Dorothy Dixon asked how much the recent ASBO case had cost. John Stirling to enquire.

JSt

Don Brookes asked if the SLH or SLDC Handyperson scheme could be extended to include items such as wiring in an electric cooker, as he had found difficulty in locating a local tradesperson. Robin Martakies asked for an agenda item for the next meeting.

JSt

Jamie Martin had reviewed the Constitution of the Committee and had drafted some suggestions to make the document fit for post transfer governance purposes. The Committee agreed to study the suggested amendments and discuss the matter at their next meeting. In the meantime Jamie would discuss the necessary alterations with SLDC.

Don Brookes asked if the Committee Equality and Diversity policy needed updating as well. Jamie said that it would be a good idea to update that policy as well as the appendix to the Committee constitution.

808 Date of next meeting

9 February 2012 . Win Sayers gave apologies in advance.

